ON PAGE 9

19 May 1986

## Shifting the Attack on Leaks

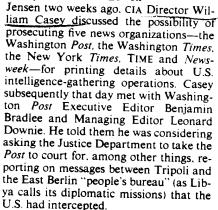
The CIA director hints at prosecution of news organizations

Administration is upset by leaks to the t is axiomatic that every Washington press, but the Reagan team has seemed especially touchy about them. During the past year the Administration has begun to put some muscle behind its temper. In October the Justice Department successfully prosecuted Samuel Loring Morison. a naval intelligence analyst, for selling U.S. satellite photos of a Soviet aircraft |

carrier to a British defense magazine. Three weeks ago, Assistant Under Secretary of Defense Michael Pillsbury was fired for allegedly giving reporters details of an Administration plan to provide Stinger missiles to anti-Communist rebels in Angola and Afghanistan.

At least one top Administration official now wants the attack shifted from the leakers to those who are accused of pub-

lishing the leaks. In a meeting with Deputy Attorney General D. Lowell



In his talk with Bradlee, the CIA director did not specify what stories published by the other news organizations aroused his anger. The New York Times, the

Washington Times. TIME and Newsweek were all mystified when the Post printed its account of the Casey-Bradlee conversation last Wednesday.

What Casey did make plain to Bradlee was that the reason he wanted to talk with him was less to complain about past stories than to head off one as yet unpublished. The Post planned to print the story in question, written by Assistant Managing Editor Bob Woodward, two days later. The story deals mainly, and in great detail, with a secret intelligence- Post Editor Bradlee



CIA's William Casey

he remains unpersuaded that the story poses a threat to national security, he so far has postponed its publication. Casey told Bradlee that if the Post printed its story, he would recommend

magazines.

It is not clear how serious the CIA chief is about bringing the Post and other news organizations to court; not the least of Casey's difficulties, of course, is that many of the classified leaks he deplores come from the Government, including his own department. According to agency officials. Casey does not truly contemplate bringing suit against all five newspapers and magazines, but only cited them to Bradlee to underline his concern about publication of the Woodward piece. "It seems as if Bill Casey was shooting with an automatic weapon against the Washington Post and forgot to release the trigger," says an agency official. "It is not a CIA-vs.-the-press campaign.

collection operation that the U.S. has conducted against the Soviet Union. Intelli-

gence-community officials believe that

revelation of the details will jeopardize

the operation. Although Bradlee says that

that the paper be prosecut-

ed under the "intelligence

statute." According to Ad-

ministration officials. Ca-

sey apparently has in mind

Section 798 of Title 18 of

the U.S. Code. Passed into

law in 1951, the so-called

COMINT statute makes it il-

legal for anyone to disclose

classified information about U.S. ciphers, code

breaking and other com-

munications intelligence.

Though Section 798 specif-

ically forbids the publica-

tion of secrets, it has never

before been invoked

against newspapers or

Even if Casey persists, the final say on prosecution belongs to Attorney General Edwin Meese. At the moment.

Justice Department lawyers are cool to the idea. "We're not hot to trot on this thing," says one Jus-tice official. That lack of enthusiasm is mirrored on Capitol Hill by lawmakers who deal regularly with the CIA. Says Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont, vice chairman of the Select Committee on Intelligence: "When you go after press organizations. you're treating the symptoms rather than the problem." — By James Kelly. Reported by Anne Constable and David Halevy/Washington



Declassified and Approved For Release 2012/02/28: CIA-RDP91-00561R000100130004-3